

ESTHER – FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

I. Ahasuerus Threw Two Parties

A. Ahasuerus was the emperor of the entire region. “Now it came to pass in the days of **Ahasuerus**, (this *is* Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, **over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces**:)” (ESTHER 1:1)

B. After days of drinking, Ahasuerus decided to show off Queen Vasti to his drinking companions. “**On the seventh day**, when the heart of the king was **merry with wine, he commanded** Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, To **bring Vashti** the queen before the king with the crown royal, **to shew the people and the princes her beauty**: for she was fair to look on.” (ESTHER 1:10-11)

C. The queen would not cooperate. “But the queen **Vashti refused** to come at the king’s commandment by *his* chamberlains: **therefore was the king very wroth**, and his anger burned in him.” (ESTHER 1:12)

D. In the corruption of their minds the nobles projected far more than Vashti stated and imagined a social disaster which had to be treated preemptively. “**For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands** in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.” (ESTHER 1:17)

E. The king arranged a beauty contest to locate a replacement for Vashti. “And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may **gather together all the fair young virgins** unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king’s chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given *them*: And **let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen** instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.” (ESTHER 2:3-4) “**And the king loved Esther above all the women**, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, **and made her queen** instead of Vashti. **Then the king made a great feast** unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther’s feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.” (ESTHER 2:17-18)

II. Esther Threw a Party

A. Mordecai, Esther’s uncle, saved the king’s life. “In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, two of the king’s chamberlains, **Bigthan and Teresh**, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and **sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus**. And the thing was known to **Mordecai**, who **told it unto Esther** the queen; and **Esther certified the king thereof** in Mordecai’s name.” (ESTHER 2:21-22)

B. Haman became incensed when Mordecai did not give him the respect he demanded. “And *all the king’s servants*, that were in the king’s gate, bowed, and *reverenced Haman*: for the king had so commanded concerning him. *But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.*” (ESTHER 3:2)

C. To kill Mordecai, Haman plotted to kill all the Jews. “And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore *Haman sought to destroy all the Jews* that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even the people of Mordecai.*” (ESTHER 3:6)

D. Mordecai explained the situation to Esther. “For *if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place*; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and *who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” (ESTHER 4:14)

E. The beauty queen made her profession of faith. “Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and *fast ye for me*, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; *and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*” (ESTHER 4:16)

F. As Esther prayed Haman plotted. “*Then said Zeresh his wife* and all his friends unto him, *Let a gallows be made* of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the *thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.*” (ESTHER 5:14)

G. Ahasuerus finally remembered his debt to Mordecai. “And the king said, *What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai* for this? Then said the king’s servants that ministered unto him, *There is nothing done for him.*” (ESTHER 6:3)

H. At Esther’s feast the Haman’s plot was revealed and he was subsequently hanged on his own gallows. “Then Esther *the queen answered* and said, *If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.* For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But *if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king’s damage.*” (ESTHER 7:3-4) “Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and *Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was.* Then said the king, *Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king’s mouth, they covered Haman’s face.*” (ESTHER 7:8)

III. The Purim Party

A. Power shifted. “On that day did the king *Ahasuerus give the house of Haman* the Jews’ enemy *unto Esther* the queen. And *Mordecai came before the king*; for Esther had told what he was unto her.” (ESTHER 8:1)

B. The Jews had vengeance on their persecutors. “Now in the twelfth month, that *is*, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, *when the king’s commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them*, (though it was turned to the contrary, that *the Jews had rule over them that hated them;*)” (ESTHER 9:1)

C. The feast of Purim has been celebrated ever since. “To stablish *this* among them, that they should *keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth* day of the same, *yearly*, As the days wherein *the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy*, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them *days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.*” (ESTHER 9:21-22)